

**October 25, 2012 meeting minutes
Cambridge GLBT Commission**

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2012

Call to Order.

Kevin Shpritzer recorded these minutes.

Agenda for the October 25 meeting was accepted.

The minutes of the September 27 meeting were approved.

Commissioners Present: John Gintell, Steven Lee, Kevin Shpritzer, Aren Stone, Mike McKenna, Gregory Grays-Thomas, Caitlin Drechsler, Robert Coats, Bob Parlin, Mal Malme, Maggie Giles,

Commissioners Absent: (excused) – Jeff Walker, Neil MacInnes-Barker, Rebecca Caira-Davila, Lesley Phillips – (unexcused) Dana Zircher

Guests: Students and staff from CCSC (Cambridge Community Charter School), Chris Burke (Supt. of Police)

- I. **CCSC (7th-9th grade – lower school – 10th-12th – upper school)**
 - a. Trying to start a Gay Straight Alliance (GSA).
 - b. Issues need to be raised regarding students' comfort level with sexuality.
 - c. Don't feel sexual preferences are widely accepted
 - d. Want their school to be a safe zone for everyone.
 - e. Goal of attending the GLBT Commission meeting was to introduce themselves and to get help and ideas for how to start the GSA.
 - f. Students may not be aware of what LGBTQ actually is and need education.
 - g. Student members of the LGBTQ community overhear slurs being used and may hesitate with being open about their sexuality.
 - i. Slurs are not necessarily said openly in school, but are often heard en route to and after school.
 - h. Concerned especially with how the boys at their school view and talk about sexuality. They seem to be less accepting of differences than the girls.
 - i. A lot of the slurs come from the students at the lower school.
 - j. CCSC has a new push for extra-curricular activities and clubs, and a lot of interest from students in establishing and becoming involved in a GSA.
 - k. Mal suggested that it's important for peers to run the group.
 - l. Robert offered to come in and speak to individual classes if whole-school assemblies are not possible.
 - m. Aren suggested the movie *It's Elementary*.
 - n. GLSEN (Gay Lesbian Straight Educators Network) and the Commission have material regarding being an ally.
 - i. Bob was a founder of GLSEN and long time faculty advisor to the GSA at the high school where he teaches and can help arrange faculty training.
 - ii. GLSEN has a conference around the end of March. Students can attend as well.

- o. CRLS has had a GSA--Project 10 East-- for many years and would be a good source for peer leaders.
- p. BAGLY (Boston Area Gay and Lesbian Youth) and NAGLY (North Shore...) have useful resources as well. Mal could connect CCSC with those groups.
- q. Bob gave a rundown of how the GSA at his school works (weekly meetings, speakers, etc.)
- r. It seems that the group has two goals: to support each other as a GSA and to educate the rest of the school community.
- s. Concerns were expressed about how to keep private information shared with the GSA from getting out to the general community.
 - i. Bob clarified that a GSA is not a counseling group, and major personal issues do need to be brought to guidance counselors.

II. Future Events

- a. December 6 focus group meeting in CPD on community involvement.
- b. GLBT Town Meeting coming up Saturday.
 - i. Aren reviewed the agenda for the meeting.
 - ii. Starts at 9:00 Keynote speaker, Rep. Byron Rushing
 - iii. Discussions are from 10:30-12:00. 6 topics. Two facilitators for each
 - 1. Public safety and police
 - 2. Senior issues
 - 3. Health care
 - 4. Schools and families
 - 5. LGBT community spaces building
 - 6. Economic, legal and housing issues
 - iv. 12:00 – Lunch and some brief presentations, including John on our current projects
 - v. 1:00-2:00 – Report-back period
- c. Film events
 - i. Robert suggested having a viewing of *Brother Outsider*, which is about Bayard Rustin.
 - 1. Film cost \$99.
 - 2. It would be great to show it around when we're first soliciting nominations for the Bayard Rustin Service Award.
 - 3. 2013 marks the 50th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington, of which Bayard Rustin was the organizer. There is a new March on Washington being planned for next year with significant LGBTQ involvement.
 - ii. Commissioners should keep an eye out for other relevant movies.
 - 1. *It's Elementary* and *It's Still Elementary* would be good as well.

III. Administrative

- a. Some terms are expiring. – Dec 3rd deadline for applications
- b. We will have up to five open positions.
- c. Advertising for the open positions can be done easily at the Town Hall meeting.

IV. Youth on Fire

- a. Jeff has a friend working on a church committee putting together 150 backpacks of necessities for the kids at Youth on Fire, a drop in center for homeless youth, many of whom are LGBTQ.
- b. Commission could possibly help purchase items for the backpacks as opposed to making a donation.
- c. Maggie will follow-up with Jeff and with the head of Youth On Fire to find out what items the group would like to have donated.
- d. *Commission voted to approve up to \$500 to spend on items for the backpacks.*

V. Planning/Updates for Commission Projects

- a. Seniors Health and Housing
 - i. Need to create a draft survey.
 - ii. Getting feedback/interest at the town hall meeting may help get funding for this effort.
- b. Youth Project
 - i. Many afterschool activities are not run by the city.
 - ii. Caitlin has been searching for surveys.
 - 1. Most have been geared toward surveying the students.
 - 2. She would prefer surveys addressed to coaches, teachers, etc.

VI. Improvements to content of Web pages

- a. Mike created a Google Group for the GLBT Commission to replace the current Yahoo Group.
- b. Some time may be carved out of the November meeting to demonstrate
- c. Caitlin, Dana, Mike, Rebecca, and John will meet to figure out the logistics. We agreed to wait until after the Tech group meets to make any changes away from the current Yahoo group.
- d. Womens Commission has its own website. This may be an option for our commission.
- e. Steven has started updating our web content. He will look into potential domain names.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:20pm